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HHRP Lecture Nov. 25 with P. Sabin Willett

11/21/08--THE HOLOCAUST/HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE 10TH ANNUAL OWEN M. KUPFERSCHMID MEMORIAL LECTURE, FEATURING P. SABIN WILLETT, ESQ., WILL TAKE PLACE ON NOVEMBER 25.

11/21/08--The Owen M. Kupferschmid Holocaust/Human Rights Project at Boston College Law School is pleased to announce that the 10th Annual Owen M. Kupferschmid Memorial Lecture, featuring P. Sabin Willett, Esq., will take place on November 25 at 5 pm in room 120 of the Law Schools East Wing.

Willett will be speaking on "America Unbecoming: Reflections from the Guantanamo Looking Glass." Willett is a partner at Bingham McCutchen in Boston. While a specialist in insolvency, since 2005 Willett has led the firm's pro bono team representing prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.

Though the U.S. government, in September, has confirmed that none of his clients are enemy combatants, only three have been released. "Fear and war do funny things to people," said Willett, referring to the unlawful imprisonment of 350 detainees, only 10 of which have been actually charged with a crime.

Recently, Willett's defense of the Uighur detainees has received significant attention. The men were detained at Guantanamo after fleeing a U.S. bombing in Afghanistan to seek shelter in Pakistan. They were taken into custody and turned over to American forces and have been spending 22 hours a day in isolation, despite the fact that they are not considered a threat.

Because of Sabin Willett's work, a habeas judge ordered the release and resettlement of the detainees in early October; however, the government ordered an emergency stay, so November 24th, the day preceding his lecture at BC, he will argue the appeal in the D.C. Circuit.

The Holocaust/Human Rights Project is named for its founder, a 1986 law school graduate, and helps to ensure that the precedential value of Holocaust-related law is fully realized and applied to state-sponsored human rights violations today.

"Willett's crucial role and commitment to the preservation of justice in a time of war is both an inspiration and a challenge to legal professionals," said Nadia Ben-Youssef, HHRP President. "The HHRP Project is honored to provide a forum for Mr. Willett's important address."

The lecture is co-sponsored by the Boston College Center for Human Rights and International Justice, American Civil Liberties Union, American Constitutional Society, Amnesty International, Black Law Students Association, Boston College Law Democrats, Criminal Justice Project, International Law Society, LAMBDA and the Public Interest Law Foundation.